

# LONE WOLF

AND

子連れ狼

# CUB

VOLUME 1

## THE ASSASSIN'S ROAD

By KAZUO KOIKE  
& GOSEKI KOJIMA



子連水狼

# LONE WOLF AND CUB

子と狼

story  
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art  
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THE  
ASSASSIN'S  
ROAD

By KAZUO KOIKE  
& GOSEKI KOJIMA

子連れ狼



VOLUME

1

# A NOTE TO READERS

*Lone Wolf and Cub* is famous for its carefully researched re-creation of Edo-Period Japan. To preserve the flavor of the work, we have chosen to retain many Edo-Period terms that have no direct equivalents in English. Japanese is written in a mix of Chinese ideograms and a syllabic writing system, resulting in numerous synonyms. In the glossary, you may encounter words with multiple meanings. These are words written with Chinese ideograms that are pronounced the same but carry different meanings. A Japanese reader seeing the different ideograms would know instantly which meaning it is, but these synonyms can cause confusion when Japanese is spelled out in our alphabet. *O-yurushi o* (please forgive us)!

# LONE WOLF AND CUB



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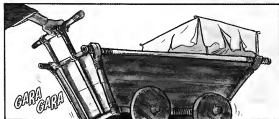
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*the first*

**Son  
for  
Hire,  
Sword  
for  
Hire**











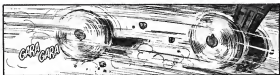


















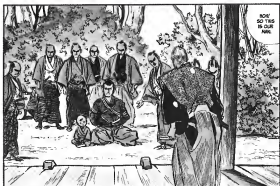












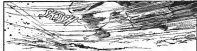








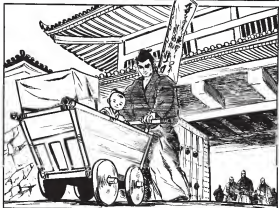
















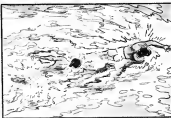
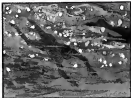
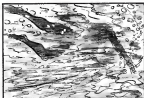




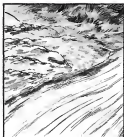
*the second*  
**A Father  
Knows  
His  
Child's  
Heart,  
as Only  
a Child  
Can Know  
His  
Father's**

















THINGS,  
MY LADY...



AND SOMEONE  
HAS BEEN  
MURDERED...



HE WAS A  
MAN WHO NEVER  
REMOVED HIS  
CAVALRY PISTOLS,  
NOT EVEN WHEN  
HE SLEPT...

YET HE WAS  
FOUND HANGED,  
STABBED, CARRIED  
DOWNSTREAM ON  
THE RAIN TOWER...



THE  
KILLERS?

STILL FREE,  
MY LADY. I HAVE  
ALL OUR MEN  
SEARCHING  
FOR HIM, BUT  
AS FOR MORN...



IT WOULD  
SEEM SOMEONE  
HAD SWIFTED OUT  
MY PLANS, WHY?  
THEY'VE HUNG  
A MASTER  
KILLER.



INDEED...  
LADY D-DEED  
AND HER PEOPLE ARE  
DESPERATE, MY LADY.  
THEY ARE HUNG  
FIGHTERS AS FIRST  
AS THEY CAN...

FOR FOR FOR,  
NOW CHANGING.  
WELL, THEY  
SHALL DO  
CONFIDENT ME,  
I WONDER?







I SHALL  
MY LIGHT  
BY HONOR  
AND  
TECHNIQUE  
KNOWS NO EQUAL.



SO-  
KOSITSU-  
SWAY?

AYE...



ALL?



IT...  
PLEASE COME  
TO YOUR LIGHT  
TO THOSE WHO WOULD  
OFFER THEIR LIFE  
TO MY SERVICE,  
I, TOO.



CALL  
ONE THEM...  
EVERYTHING

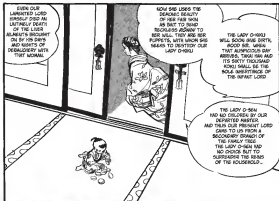
AYE...







THERE IS NOT A MAN ALIVE WHO WOULD NOT LOSE HEART AND MIND TO THE BEAUTY OF OUR DEPARTED LORD'S MOTHER, THE LADY O-SAN!



EVEN OUR UNWANTED LORD PROBABLY DIED AN UNTHOUGHTFUL DEATH OF THE LIES ALBERT'S BROUGHT ON BY HIS OWN AND HEARTS OF DECEITFULITY WITH THAT MORAL.

NOW SHE LOSES THE BECOMING BEAUTY OF HER FAN SONG AS BAIT TO SHED TEARLESS JOYFUL TO HER WILL. THEY ARE HER PUPPETS, WITH WHICH SHE MEANS TO DESTROY OUR LADY O-SAN!

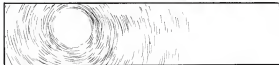
THE LADY O-SAN WILL SOON GIVE BIRTH, GOOD MR. UREA THAT AUSPICIOUS DAY ARRIVES, TAKAI SAN AND ITS SIXTY THOUSAND KOKU SHALL BE THE SOLE INHERITANCE OF THE DEPARTED LORD.

THE LADY O-SAN HAD NO CHILDREN BY OUR DEPARTED MASTER, AND THEN OUR PRESENT LORD CAME TO US FROM A SECONDARY BRANCH OF THE FAMILY TREE. THE LADY O-SAN HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO SURRENDER THE REINS OF THE HOUSEHOLD...



NOW SHE SOUBERS TO CLIMB THE FAUCET OF THE SHOGUNATE IN EDO, AND TO FIND A NEW RUGGARD FROM THE SHOGUN'S BLOODLINE. WITH THE POWER OF EDO BEHIND HER, SHE WOULD MAKE HER RUGGARD THE HEART LORD OF TAKAI SAN!

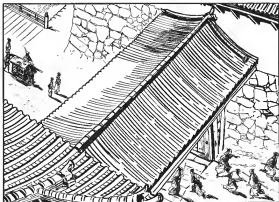
THE TOKUGAWA CLAN HAS TOO MANY DESCENDANTS TO PLACE THEM ALL IN WORTHY POSITS WITHIN THE SACRAMENTAL GOVERNMENT. IN THIS SENSE TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR OWN, THEY WILL SURELY AGREE TO THE LADY O-SAN'S PETITION, AND WILL SECRETLY ASSIST HER SOMETHING TO RETURN TO POWER. AND THEN, GOOD MR. YOUR STRENGTH IS ALL THAT WE CAN COUNT ON. WE SURELY SEE YOUR ASSISTANCE.



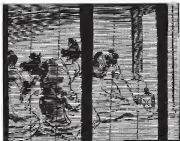


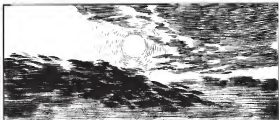














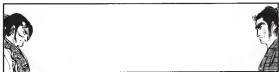
















D - DAMN  
YOU KNOW DID  
YOU KNOW MY  
POOR SON  
FORGONE...



YOU COULD SEE  
MY SKILL WITH  
THE SWORD AND  
YET YOU RELEASED  
THIS CHILD

IT WAS THE  
CONFIDENCE OF  
ONE WHO TRUSTS  
WEAPONS OVER  
SKILL. WHAT ELSE  
COULD IT BE BUT  
A FURZLEST



AL MONSTER...  
TO THE VERY END,  
YOU LIVE YOUR  
OWN CHILD.  
END HIS LIFE...



DID NOT I SAY? A  
FATHER KNOWS HIS  
OWN SON BEST. AN  
ONLY A CHILD CAN  
KNOW HIS FATHER'S  
FATHER AND CHILD  
WALK THROUGH  
LIFE, HAND  
IN HAND

THIS IS SHOGUN,  
THE SOUL OF LIFE  
GIVES FATHER AND  
SON RELY ON THEIR  
SOUL TO DO WHAT  
THEY MUST TO  
SURVIVE...



DISORDER!  
THIS IS NOW  
IT MUST BE

YOU AND I  
UNFORGIVABLE



BACK  
IN OUR  
DESTINY





*the third*

**From  
North  
to South,  
From  
West  
to East**



KNIGHT  
AN EMERGENCY  
WITH A GHOST



YES, MY LORD,  
HE IS ACCOMPANIED BY A YOUNG  
BOY, SOME THREE YEARS IN AGE,  
WHETHER IT IS HIS OWN SON,  
OR THEY ARE TOGETHER FOR SOME  
OTHER REASON, NONE CAN TELL. SOME  
THE HUNT ARE HIS COUNTRY OF  
ORIGIN, ALL HIS GLOVED IN HISTORY,  
WHAT IS KNOWN, MY LORD, IS HIS  
DEADLY SKILL. NO ONE IS HAS BEEN  
FREE TO KILL HIM EVER SINCE HE LIVED,  
AND THEY SAY HE LEAVES NO  
TRACE OF EVIDENCE BEHIND.

THOSE WHO ARE HIS MUST  
REVEAL THEIR SECRETS BEFORE  
HE WILL ACCEPT THE JOB. YET,  
THOUGH HE COULD BLAZONAL THEM  
AT ANY TIME, THERE IS NO DUBBAGE  
THAT ANY HAS TRIED TO KILL HIM  
ONCE HE HAS PROMISED HE WORKS  
IN FRONT, MY LORD, HIS SKILL IS  
SO GREAT THEY DARE NOT TRY.  
AFTER MANY ATTEMPTS, I HAVE  
FINALLY BEEN ABLE TO ESTABLISH  
CONTACT. HE WILL BE HERE,  
MY LORD, TOMORROW.  
AT THE HIGHEST HOUR.



I LEAVE IT TO YOU.  
BUT THE DEAD  
BURIALS DON'T THAT  
DOUBT OUR DIGNITY



MY LORD,  
SINCE YOU IT THAT  
THE DEAD THEMSELVES  
TAKE PART IN  
THE KILLINGS.

WHAT SAY YOU?



THE CHILD  
OF A WOLF,  
MY LORD,  
IS STILL  
A WOLF.























AS I  
THOUGHT THEY  
DELIBERATELY  
SLASHED HIM SO  
HE WOULDN'T DIE  
INSTANTLY THEY  
WANTED HIM TO  
LEAD THEM BACK  
TO YOU.



WHO WOULD  
ARE THESE  
PEOPLE?

THE  
SHOGUNATE'S  
FOAM-  
ARTS?



SECRET ARTS  
BACKGROUND WITH  
ACCOMPLISH THE  
MOUNTAIN REGION  
UNDER THE  
SHOGUNATE'S DIRECT  
CONTROL!

THEY'RE  
TOUGH AND  
BARBICUED  
FIGHTERS.



KUOKU JOMI  
LEADS THEM, A MASTER  
OF THE GROUND-LEVEL  
HIS SCORING QUICK  
DRINK IS FAVORITE  
THROUGHOUT  
THE LAND.



YOUR MAN SAID THERE WERE  
FIVE GUARDS, BUT THAT WOULD BE  
THE ONES WITH THE PRISONER ITSELF  
THERE MUST BE A SCORE OR MORE  
SHADOWING IT FROM THE WOODS  
AND HILLS. THERE'S NO WAY YOU CAN  
MOUNT A SUCCESSFUL ATTACK.  
EVEN IF YOU WILL BE USELESS.  
IT'S CHILD'S PLAY FOR A  
MOUNTAIN SHADOW TO SMYTHE OUT A  
BURNING PATROLMAN FUSE.



THEN, THEN  
YOU'RE SAYING  
YOU WON'T  
DO IT?



I'M  
SAYING  
I WILL.











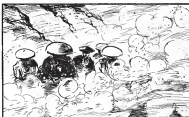














TH - THIS  
ISNT WHAT WE  
NEEDED FOR!

WHO TOLD  
YOU TO SAVE  
WAKATSU JOMYU



W - WE  
PAID FOR AN  
ASSASSINATION!



AND SO  
I HAVE  
AGGREGATED  
HER.



WH -  
WHAT?



THAT'S  
AWKWARD!  
MEANS STILL  
ASAP! HOW  
CAN YOU SAY  
THAT?



WHEN THE WIND  
THAT HAS BLOWN  
FROM NORTH TO  
SOUTH SWIFTS TO  
BLOW FROM WEST  
TO EAST, DOES  
NOT THE WEATHER  
CHANGE?

DON'T BRACE  
YOURSELF AGAINST  
THE COLD NORTH WIND  
THINK OF THE WARMTH  
WHEN THE EAST WIND  
REVERSES THE COURSE  
OF SPRING



RESPECTOR:  
SHEPHERD  
DID HE  
MEAN?

HEM... AN IDEAL I CAN TELL.  
HE'S SAYING THAT EITHER  
THEY FACE THE COLD NORTH  
WIND AND ALLOW THEMSELVES  
TO BE TAKEN TO SDC FOR  
INTERROGATION, IT'S WISE  
FOR USHIN TO TRUST IN THE  
USE OF HISO. BUT IS, IN FACT,  
TAKING HIM TO THE END, SO  
HE WILL PROTECT  
HIS CHILD TO  
THE END...



WOW  
THAT IS  
THAT  
CASE...

WANT BETTER  
WAY TO A MAN'S  
HEART THAN  
THE ROAD OF  
BLOOD BETWEEN  
FIGHT  
AND CHILL?



IT'S THE ART OF  
IMAGINE FROM NOW FROM  
"ART OF WOLF" SUN  
TAI BROUGHT DOWN THE  
EMPEROR'S CASTLE BY  
LOSING THE PARADES OF  
THE DEATHS TO  
OCEAN AND BREAK  
THEIR WILL...



A FORTIFIABLE  
FOR... THIS LONG  
WOLF AND CLUB















*the fourth*

# **Baby Cast on the River Styx**





































BOTH SIDES HAVE BEEN  
BRIMMING IN REINFORCEMENTS,  
AND IT'S GOING TO BE A HOT  
SCENE. WE'LL TELL OUR NEW  
DARUM ABOUT IT, AND SEND HIM  
TO HELP US. THEN WE DASH  
TO THE SCENE.



EXCEPT,  
WE'RE JUST A  
LITTLE BIT LATE  
GETTING THERE,  
AREN'T WE?



AND BEFORE  
WE ARRIVE,  
YOU KILL THE  
DARUM.



AND ALL HIS REAL OF COURSE. AND THEN  
WE SURELY EXPLAIN THAT THE NEW MAN  
SHOT TRAPPED IN THE MIDDLE OF A VARIETY  
TURY WARE, AND WAS KILLED. NORMALLY  
AFTER A BIG BOMBING LIKE THIS, WE HAVE  
THE DARUM HAVE. ORDER A COUPLE OF  
THEIR BOYS. OR WE FEARED  
SOMEONE TO. WRAP THINGS UP.



BUT WE CAN'T LET THOSE  
FATHERS DOWN. SO AROUND  
KILLING DARUM, CAN WE? WE'LL  
ARREST THEM ALL, MURDER OF A  
PUBLIC OFFICIAL. COMPONENTS  
THEIR HOMES AND ASSETS. THERE'S  
NOONE SPOOKING IT AWAY FROM  
THEIR HANDS. OPERATIONS,  
SO IT SHOULD BE QUITE  
A BUNDLE.



HEY HEY HEY, IF WE PLUG UP  
THE HOLE IN OUR TAK NUMBERS  
WITH ALL THAT LOOT, THEN  
IT'LL ALL BE WORTH UNDER THE  
BENDING BY THE TIME THE NEXT  
DARUM COMES. THREE BIDS  
WITH ONE  
SYMBOL. DEEP  
HEY HEY HEY.

ALLOW  
ME TO ADD  
ONE THING.



IT WAS YOU  
AND YOUR MEN  
WHO KILLED THE  
BOSS OF THE HOUSE  
OF JIRO AND HIS  
DAIRY BOY.

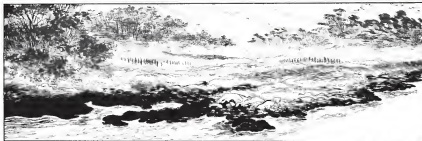


YOU  
CAN'T DRAPE  
THAT. CAN  
YOU?



DAMN  
RIGHT WE DID!  
MOVE. IF YOU  
KNOW THIS PLACE,  
YOU CAN'T BACK  
DOWN.

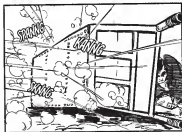
I'LL  
DO IT

















AND THEN I SAW HIM GO TO GO THE HILL

AND THEN I SAW HIM GO TO GO THE HILL





*the fifth*

# Suiō School Zanbatō



























KERL

KERL

THAT  
DAMNED  
KIDNAP!

CAN WE  
REALLY JUST  
LET HIM GO  
KNOW OUT OF  
OUR HEART?

BUT - BUT  
IF WE ATTACK  
HIM, WE'LL DESTROY  
THE GOOD NAME OF  
OUR MASTER WHO  
BROKE THAT  
ATTACKMENT!

TO  
LOVE OUR  
MASTER TO A  
WAVELESS  
KIDNAP!

WE  
JUST LET  
HIM GO, AND  
LIVE WITH IT?

IF BLAME  
OF THIS GOES  
OUT, WE'LL ALL  
LOSE FACE!

THAT'S  
RIGHT! WE  
MUST BE  
WISER!

WHY? I SAID AN ARMY!  
WE BRING A GROUP  
OF THE STRONGEST OF ALL  
OUR MASTER'S DISCIPLES,  
AND WE DEMAND THAT HE  
AGREE TO A SECOND  
FORMAL DUEL!

IF WE SAY  
IT'S A CHALLENGE  
TO RESTORE THE FACE  
OF OUR MASTER AND  
OUR SWORD SCHOOL,  
I'M SURE IT WILL  
STAY!















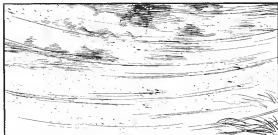
















*the sixth*

# Waiting for the Rains







THE NAKKODOMO JOURNEY THROUGH JAPAN TO THE KISO TRAIL, PASS THE TWO-LINE KISO RAIL STATIONS, AND ON TOWARD AMAGAMI...



BURDOCK! BARLEY!



THE  
RAVENS  
OPEN  
FLOWERS,  
AND  
BEEP!

THE LFL TYPE  
ACE SAYS, HE  
DOES FOUR HOURS  
ON HORSEBACK AND  
HE DON'T CRY ONCE  
LOSER, IF HE WENT  
DRIVING AND HALF  
GRABY SENSE THAT  
SAND DRAG SCAP  
OVER AND OVER...



IS IT REALLY  
ALL RIGHT TO LEAVE  
IN REPLY THE DEAL,  
WAS I BRING HIM TO  
THE BATES OF ADAM  
MURDER, AND THAT'S  
THE END OF IT...



COULDN'T HARDLY  
DAY NO MORE THAT  
UPSTAIRS  
JAMORAY ASKED  
ME, COULD I? AND  
DIDN'T HE PAY ME  
A RIGHT NICE  
FEE FOR IT,  
TOO?

WISTER  
FISH  
PINTER  
CARRY



YOU FIGURE  
THE LITTLE  
FELLAS RUN  
IS MORE...







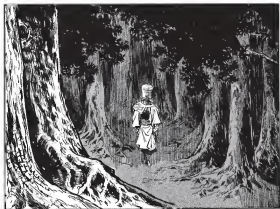
















THREE YEARS SINCE OUR LORD'S DEATH AND OUR FAN WERE DISSOLVED BY THE SHOGUNATE. ALL BECAUSE OF THAT MAN WHO AMONGST HAVE BEEN PURSUING HIM SINCE SINCE. WITH NOTHING TO LIVE ON BUT OUR AFFECTION AT LAST WE FIND A CLUE TO HIS WHEREABOUTS AND HERE FOM AND AGONY MEET? YOU TAKE OUR ARCADE, BUT YOU REFUSE TO BELIEVE WHAT ACCORD IS THAT WE LIVE FOR THE DAY THAT MAN IS KILLED, AND WE CAN PRESENT HIS HEAD BEFORE THE GRAVE OF OUR DEPARTED FOM?



THE ROAD OF THAT DESPICABLE FOM!



HE WAS JUST A LOW-BROWED ARCADE BUT HE MANAGED TO SED THE SHOGUN'S DAUGHTER SHIMIZU, AND GET HIMSELF PROMOTED TO HEAD OF THE ARCADE. HE USED HIS POSITION TO REVEAL ALL OUR SECRETS, AND THEN HE USED SHIMIZU-DOKO TO MAKE HIS ESCAPE!



THEY GOT THIS FAR BEFORE SHIMIZU REAL, ALL, SO HE CLEFT SURPRISE HIS HEAD, AND PLANS TO ESCAPE IT WAS ALL PART OF HIS PLAN FROM THE SHOGUN'S DAUGHTER SHIMIZU, ESCAPE HIM TO MAKE HIS ESCAPE.



WE DON'T KNOW UNTIL TOO LATE THAT HE WAS REALLY ONE OF THE SHOGUN'S DAUGHTER! AMONG HIS FORTRESS SHELLS ARE TOO MUCH FOR US TO TAKE HIM ON ALONE...

YET HERE YOU SIT, THUNDERING YOUR THUNDER!



THE MAN STAYED HERE FOR SEVERAL DAYS TO TAKE CARE OF HIS ELDER WIFE.

DON'T THAT SEEM A LONG TIME FOR A MAN WHO HAD ALREADY COMPLETED HIS ASSIGNMENT?

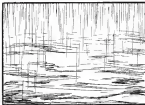
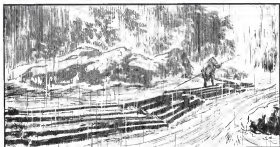
ARE YOU SUGGESTING HE LOVED HER??

ASSURE YOU DON'T KNOW OF WHAT YOU SPEAK!













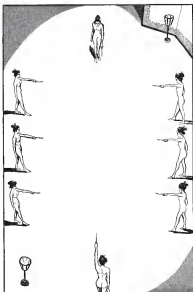






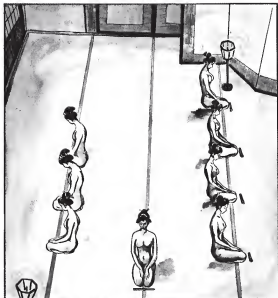






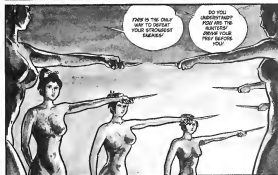
*the seventh*

# **Eight Gates of Deceit**















A NARROW SUSPENSION  
BRIDGE...

WE MUST BE  
PREPARED TO  
FIGHT HERE. BE  
IT A QUICK  
ASSAULT, OR  
THE FINAL  
BATTLE...



ARL



WHEEE!  
WHEEE!

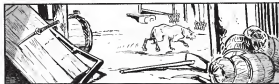
DON'T ROCK  
THE BABY,  
DARCO!















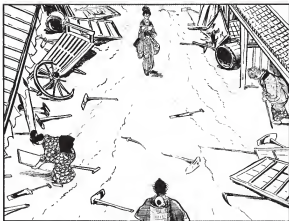
















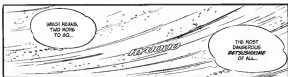
























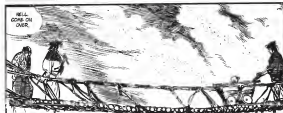


*the eighth*  
**Wings  
to  
the  
Bird,  
Fangs  
to  
the  
Beast**

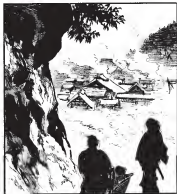










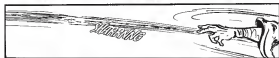




























NOT HER MEH... GIFT  
GUARANTEED YOU'LL BE  
ALIVE TOMORROW, BUT YOU  
SHOULD BEHAVE YOURSELF  
AS LONG AS YOU'RE IN  
THE LAND OF THE  
LIVING

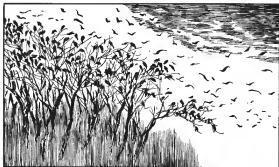


YOU MUST  
FIGURE OUT BY  
NOW THAT WE'RE  
FORWARD



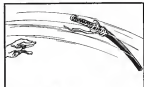
AND WHAT'LL  
HAPPEN TO YOU  
IF YOU RESIST..

















WHY  
GIVE IT A  
BREAK!

NO ONE'S  
STUPID ENOUGH  
TO FIGHT YOU,  
FORWARD!

THAT'S LIKE  
COMMITTING  
SUICIDE,  
DUMBY!

WHY?

THE MAN MAY BE  
A BORN-TO-LOSE,  
BUT HE'S  
STILL A SAMURAI! HE CAN'T GO  
AROUND SHOWING HE'S SCARED,  
OR AFRAID TO FIGHT, OR DEAD  
FOR HIS LIFE IN FRONT  
OF ALL OF US!

WHY ELSE WOULD  
HE BE SITTING THERE  
WITH HIS EYES CLOSED,  
JUST TAKING IT? SO  
LEAVE HIM BE. WHY  
DON'T YOU FIGHT A  
BIG MAN NOW!



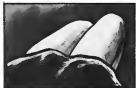




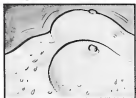




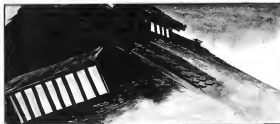


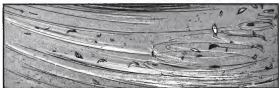
















THAT AIN'T  
SAGGERS YET,  
SEET?

YEAH, THEY'RE ALL  
HIDING IN THEIR HOMES,  
BUT THERE GOTTA BE TWENTY,  
THIRTY FOLK ON MORE LONES  
IN THIS DAMN VILLAGE. EVEN  
FURDER BASTARDS WOULDN'T  
KILL THAT MANY PEOPLE  
FOR NOTHING...



YEAH, BUT... WHEN  
DIFFERENT, WE'RE JUST  
FEARFULERS. IF WE WALK  
OUTTA HERE ALONE, WE MIGHT  
SPILL THE BEANS ON WHERE  
THE TORRADO ARE HIDEING...



WHICH  
PEAS...

HE'S RIGHT!  
OH GOD!  
WE'RE DEAD  
PEEL! ? SAGGER!



D- DARN  
IT ALL! WE'RE  
JUST BORN  
BUT HERE WAITING  
TO DIE?  
SEET?



WE CAN KICK AND  
FIGHT ALL WE WANT,  
BUT THEY'RE FORTIFIED.  
WE DON'T HAVE A CHANCE.  
THERE'S NO ESCAPE...

SAGGER?  
SEET?

WH- WHY DO  
YOU KEEP  
CALLING  
THESE MEN  
TORRADO?



WHY... KRAFT!  
RESCUE!  
WHY TORRADO... KRAFT,  
KRAFT... OOO...  
RESCUE...



ALL THOSE FOLK THAT  
SO BAD, ARE OUT DOING BULKY-MS,  
ALBINO, ARSON, BARS, YOU NAME IT,  
THEY FIGURED IT OUT, SEET? BETTER  
TO JOIN UP IN GANGS THAN BE ON  
THE RUN ALL ALONE. THAT'S WHAT  
THIS GANG IS, TORRADO...









SILENCE!

WHAT HIDE  
YOU GOT TO  
BOAST ABOUT?  
A PROSTITUTE  
AND A CHEAP  
PICKUP?



I WAS READY TO BITE OFF MY  
TONGUE AND DIE BACK THEN  
AND HE SAID IT WASN'T WORTH  
SHALLOWING HIS WORDS AND  
VOLUNTEERED TO SLEEP WITH ME...



DO YOU KNOW  
HOW HAPPY THAT  
KIDDER HELD SAVED  
THE LIFE OF A  
WOMAN LIKE ME?

HE GAVE UP  
ALL HIS SAVED  
PRIDE AND  
FORTUNE ONLY  
FOR ME...



SHIT!  
THERE ARE HUNDREDS  
OUT BUYING PORNO  
EVERY NIGHT... DON'T  
KID YOURSELF...

AND WOULD  
ALL THOSE SAVED  
OUT PAYING FOR  
PORNO PUT ASIDE  
THEIR PRIDE TO  
SAVE ONE FROM  
DEATH, MAY?



B- BUT HE  
SLEPT WITH YOU  
DID YOU WANT  
TO SAVE AND RISK  
RIGHT?

YOU DON'T  
UNDERSTAND  
ANYTHING  
ARE YOU EVEN  
DICK, WHY DON'T  
YOU?



WHAT  
THE  
HELL?



WHEN FIGHTING  
SHAKES AND POUNDS IN  
YOUR FISTS THAT YOU'RE  
GOING TO DIE, COULD YOU  
SATISFY A WOMAN, MAY?

UH...









THIS HOT  
SPRING IS NAMED  
SONORI-JURU.  
BUT EVERYONE  
CALLS IT  
SONORI-JURU.

DO  
YOU KNOW  
WHY?

....



BUT IF  
ANYBODY THEY'RE  
NOT BEING, BUT THEY  
HAVE WINGS. THEY'RE  
NOT BEING, BUT  
THEY HAVE WINGS.

THEY DON'T  
BELONG AND  
IN FOLK LIKE  
THESE DAYS  
OUTSIDERS  
ALL...



WE ALL  
STARTED COMING  
HERE, LOOKING  
FOR A LITTLE  
COMFORT,  
SOME PEACE  
OF MIND.

AND THAT'S  
THE STORY OF  
SONORI-JURU.

BUT THERE  
FORWARD THEY'RE  
BEING, BUT THEY  
ARE BEING, BUT  
AND YOU YOU'RE  
A BEING WITH  
WINGS...



WINGS AND  
FEATHERS LIKE  
THE POOR LITTLE  
BIRDS. NEVER  
WINGS.

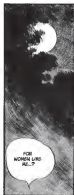


WHAT DO  
YOU WANT  
TO SAY, Y?



YOU AREN'T  
AFRAID OF THE WINGS  
OF THESE BEINGS,  
NOT IN THE ISLANDS,  
WHICH MEANS YOU  
MUST HAVE WINGS  
TO FLY AWAY.

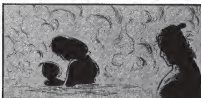




FOR  
WOMEN LIKE  
ME...



IT HELPS  
WOMEN AND WOMEN  
TO LOWER  
THEir LEVEL...



ALL RIGHT, IN A MOMENT  
GET ON  
OUT HERE!

MOVE  
YOUR  
BAGGAGE!





























*the ninth*

# The Assassin's Road



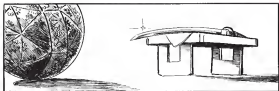


*BOUNCE POWW, BOUNCE POWW  
THAT ONE BOUNCS BOUNCS BOUNCS  
THIS ONE BOUNCS BOUNCS BOUNCS*



*THAT ONE BOUNCS BOUNCS  
THIS ONE BOUNCS BOUNCS*







TO ASSURE THE SPIRITS OF THE  
KASHIMOTO FAMILY, I  
BURN ON THE WAY OF THE  
SHAMON, AND TRAVEL THE  
PATH TO HELL, A LONG  
ROAD OF ANGER.



LISTEN  
WELL,  
SHAMON!

YOUR FATHER  
NOW WALKS THE  
ASSASSIN'S ROAD, A  
PATH OF BLOOD AND  
CORRUPTION, SLAUGHTER  
AND RECKLESS  
CRUELTY!



THERE IS NO  
OTHER WAY TO  
AVENGE OURSELVES  
ON THE ASSASSINS  
OF THE PAST  
DEAD.



NO OTHER WAY  
TO ASSURE  
THE SPIRITS OF  
OUR DEAD, DENIED  
REDEMPTION BY  
THEIR UNWANTED  
MURDER.



SHAMON!  
YOU MUST FIND  
YOUR OWN  
PATH.

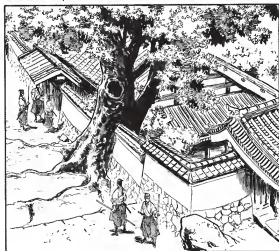
CHOOSE THE ASSASSIN'S  
ROAD, AND JOIN YOUR FATHER ON  
THE ASSASSIN'S ROAD. CHOOSE  
THE CHILD'S ROAD, AND I  
WILL SEND YOU TO JOIN  
YOUR FATHER IN HELL,  
THE LAND OF SPIRITS.





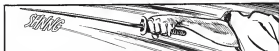




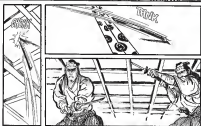






















AHHH?!



NOW,  
DARE YOU...



I HAVE  
PERSONALLY  
SHOWN THE  
HOLLYWOOD  
CREATIVES  
OF THE  
SHOGUN  
FOR PLEASANT  
SMILEY  
AND YOU FOR  
MORE THAN  
SCOTT, YARR.

ALL JAPAN LIES  
BENEATH THIS CREST.  
THE WAY OF THE WARRIOR  
DEFERS TO THIS ALONE.  
HEH HEH HEH HEH... IT'S  
TIME I GOT SOME LINE  
OUT OF IT. HEH HEH  
HEH HEH...



HEHHEH...

OUT  
OF MY  
WAY!



W- WHAT?



SHED YOUR EXECUTIONER'S ROBES!  
DO THAT, AND THE YAMUO CLAN SHALL  
CHALLENGE YOU AN EMBROIDERER TO A  
FORMAL DUEL! IF HISTORY IS YOURS, I WILL  
LET YOU GO UNHARMED. DO ANYTHING, SO  
LONG AS YOU NEVER SET FOOT IN  
AND AGAIN!



AND IF  
I SAY...  
NO?



THE AMBASADORS  
OF THE YAMUO CLAN  
SHALL FURNISH YOU  
TO THE SWORD OF  
THE EMPIRE...



LO- LORD YAMUO, YOU ~~ARE NOT~~ MUST  
PERVERT THE SHOGUN'S WILL!  
THIS PROMISE ~~SHOULD~~ STAND!

SILENCE!!  
ALL RESPONSIBILITY  
RESTS WITH ME!

IF HE DENIES  
THE COURT,  
IF THE SHOGUN  
SPREADS, IT WILL  
SHAKE THE VERY  
AUTHORITY OF THE  
SHOGUNATE  
ITSELF!



WELL??



...I ACCEPT.

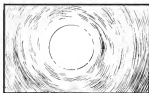












*LONE WOLF AND CUB  
BOOK ONE: THE END  
TO BE CONTINUED*

# GLOSSARY

## **ashigaru**

A foot soldier in the employ of a *daimyō*, lowest of the warrior ranks.

## **bangashira**

Commander of the guard. Each *han* had a standing guard — the *ban* — of samurai to protect the lord and castle. The *ō-bangashira* was the supreme commander of the guard, the general of the *han* army.

## **bushi**

A samurai. A member of the warrior class.

## **ō-metsuke**

Chief inspector. The supreme inspector of the shogunate, the I. Bôgar Hoover of the Tokugawa power structure.

## **daikan**

The primary local representative of the shogunate in territories outside of the capital of Edo. The *daikan* and his staff collected taxes owed to Edo and oversaw public works, agriculture, and other projects administered by the central government.

## **daikansho**

The office of the *daikan*.

## **daimyō**

A feudal lord.

## **danzai**

The samurai's right to put to death anyone who insulted their honor.

## **deiri**

A fight between rival *yakuza* gangs. From their clothes, speech, and greetings, it is clear that the house of Jikō are *yakuza*, Japan's criminal syndicates. In the Edo period, *yakuza* were a common part of the landscape, running houses of gambling and prostitution. As long as they did not overstep their bounds, they were tolerated by the authorities, a tradition little changed in modern Japan.

## **dono**

A term of respect for a higher-ranking official or aristocrat. A more common term of respect among civilians is *sewa*, indicating more respect than the most common *san*.

## **dōtanuki**

A battle sword, literally, "sword that cuts through torsos."

## **Edo**

The capital of medieval Japan.

## **fudasashi**

Merchant houses specializing in rice. They loaned gold to *han* governments, loans secured by the *han*'s projected rice revenues.

**han**

A feudal domain.

**hanishi**

Samurai in the service of a han.

**hollyhock crest**

Each samurai family had a family crest considered synonymous with the clan itself. The Tokugawa clan crest was a three-leaved hollyhock. To point one's sword toward the shogun's crest was to point your sword toward the shogun himself, an unforgivable act of treason.

**honmaru**

The large, central keep of a Japanese castle.

**Iga-yashiki**

There were two main ninja clans in Japan, from the Iga and Kōga regions respectively. The Iga ninja served the shogunate. The Iga-yashiki (residence) was their base in Edo.

**jigoku-tabi**

Literally, "a journey to hell." When *yakusa* would go ask allies to help them in a fight.

**juku**

Way station. The major byways through Japan during the Edo period had way stations a day's walk apart with inns, tea houses, and other facilities for the traveler. The names of these old way stations still remain in many Japanese cities.

**kaishaku**

A second. In the rite of *seppuku*, a samurai was allowed death with honor by cutting up his own abdomen. After the incision was complete, the second would perform *kaishaku*, severing the samurai's head for a quick death. The second was known as a *kaishakunin*.

**Kannon**

Buddhist goddess of mercy.

**karō**

Elders, usually the senior advisor to a *daimyō*, the lord of a han. Since the *daimyō* was required to alternate each year between life in his castle in the han and his residence in Edo, the capital and the seat of the Tokugawa shogunate, there was usually an *Edo-karō* (Edo elder) and a *han-karō* (han elder), who would administer affairs in Edo or in the han when their lord was away.

**kenshiyaku**

The shogunate official present at an execution to confirm the death of the person to be killed.

**koku**

1. A bale of rice. The traditional measure of a han's wealth, a measure of its agricultural land and productivity.
2. Standard time unit in the Edo period. Approximately two hours long, further sub-divided into three equal parts.

**kōmori**

A bat.

**Kongming**

A famous general and tactician who lived during the warring states period in ancient China, born 181 A.D., died 234 A.D.

**kuramoto**

Merchant houses. Under the Confucian social order imposed by the Tokugawa shogunate, merchants ranked a lowly fourth in Japan's four-strata caste society. But, in fact, by the middle Edo period the merchant class had gained tremendous wealth and power by managing the assets of the *hōr* and selling *hōr* dice and other products. Many *hōr* fell deeply into debt to the big merchant houses.

**makura-sagashi**

Literally pillow searcher. A wandering thief who preyed on other travelers, stealing their valuables from under their pillows while they slept.

**meido**

The afterlife. The land after death. Believed to be a place of darkness. Only a few Buddhist sects described a division between heaven and hell.

**meifumadō**

The Buddhist hell, the way of demons and damnation.

**metsuke**

Inspector, a post combining the functions of chief of police and chief intelligence officer.

**namu amida butsu**

One of the most common of all Buddhist chants, calling for mercy in the world to come.

**ogamu**

To pray.

**o-niwaban**

"One in the garden." A ninja. The secret agent of the shogunate, heard but never seen.

**rōnin**

A masterless samurai. Literally one adrift on the waves. Members of the samurai caste who have lost their masters through the dissolution of *hōr*, expulsion for misbehavior, or other reasons. Prohibited from working as farmers or merchants under the strict Confucian caste system imposed by the Tokugawa shogunate, many impoverished *rōnin* became "hired guns" for whom the code of the samurai was nothing but empty words.

**ryō**

A gold piece.

**ryū**

Often translated as "school." The many variations on swordsmanship and other martial arts were passed down from generation to generation to the offspring of the originator of the technique or set of techniques, and to any *dōshō* students that sought to learn from the master. The largest schools had their own *dōjō* training centers, and scores of students. An effective swordsman had to study the different techniques of the different schools to know how to block them in combat. Many *ryū* also had a set

of special, secret techniques that were only taught to school initiates.

### **Sakushū**

A town in what is today Okayama prefecture.

### **Sanzu-no-kawa**

The river Sanzu, the Japanese equivalent of the river Styx. On their way to the afterlife, the dead must take boats across the river Sanzu.

### **satoiri ninja**

Ninja in the *sato* (homeland). In addition to the ninja based in Edo, the shogunate placed ninja undercover in the various *han* of rival lords. These moles would monitor dissident *han* and gather evidence that could be used to blackmail or dissolve a *han* when it slipped out of line.

### **seppuku**

The right to kill oneself with honor to atone for failure, or to follow one's master into death. Only the samurai class was allowed this glorious but excruciating death. The abdomen was cut horizontally, followed by an upward cut to spill out the intestines. When possible, a *kashakunin* performed a beheading after the cut was made to shorten the agony.

### **shima**

The zone of death.

### **shinobi**

Ninja. The *yamato-metalake* work undercover, unlike the *dai-metsake* in Edo.

### **Sun Tzu**

The great 500 B.C. Chinese military strategist, author of the classic *Sun Tzu Sings* ("The Art of War").

### **Tokaidō**

The most important of the Edo-era travel routes, connecting Edo with the "kanto" region of *Kyōto* and *Osaka*. Now traversed by freeways and high-speed "bullet" trains.

### **Tokugawa**

The Tokugawa clan, the warrior family that unified Japan following its victory at the battle of Sekigahara in 1600, and ruled until 1867 from its castle in the city of Edo. The period is commonly known as the Edo period. The shogun was both the head of the Tokugawa clan and the head of the Tokugawa *bakufu* — the shogunate government — that ran national policy and kept the often unruly *han* at heel.

### **tono**

Lord, *daimyō*. Sometimes used as a form of address, as in *tono-sama*.

### **tosenin**

Literally, "rootless one," one who travels the world. A euphemism for a wandering *yakusa*.

# KAZUO KOIKE

Though widely respected as a powerful writer of graphic fiction, Kazuo Koike has spent a lifetime reaching beyond the bounds of the comics medium. Aside from co-creating and writing the successful *Love Wolf and Cub* and *Crying Freeman* manga, Koike has hosted television programs; founded a golf magazine; produced movies; written popular fiction, poetry, and screenplays, and mentored some of Japan's best manga talent.

*Love Wolf and Cub* was first serialized in Japan in 1970 (under the title *Kazure Oshichi*) in *Manga Action* magazine and continued its hugely popular run for many years, being collected as the stories were published, and reprinted worldwide. Koike collected numerous awards for his work on the series throughout the next decade. Starting in 1972, Koike adapted the popular manga into a series of six films, the *Baby Cart Atarashi* saga, garnering widespread commercial success and critical acclaim for his screenwriting.

This wasn't Koike's only foray into film and video. In 1996, *Crying Freeman*, the manga Koike created with artist Ryoichi Ikegami, was

produced in Hollywood and released to commercial success in Europe and is currently awaiting release in America.

And to give something back to the medium that gave him so much, Koike started the *Gekiga Senjaku*, a college course aimed at helping talented writers and artists — such as *Bakura 1/2* creator Rumiko Takahashi — break into the comics field.

The driving focus of Koike's narrative is character development, and his commitment to character is clear: "Comics are carried by characters. If a character is well created, the comic becomes a hit." Kazuo Koike's continued success in comics and literature has proven this philosophy true.



# GOSEKI KOJIMA

Goseki Kojima was born on November 3, 1928, the very same day as the godfather of Japanese comics, Osamu Tezuka. While just out of junior high school, the self-taught Kojima began painting advertising posters for movie theaters to pay his bills.

In 1950, Kojima moved to Tokyo, where the postwar devastation had given rise to special manga forms for audiences too poor to buy the new manga magazines. Kojima created art for *kami-shibui*, or "paper-play" narrators, who would use manga story sheets to present narrated street plays. Kojima moved on to creating works for the *kashi-hon* market, bookstores that rented out books, magazines, and manga to mostly low-income readers. He soon became highly popular among *kashi-hon* readers.

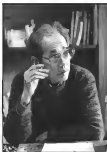
In 1967, Kojima broke into the magazine market with his series *Dejireki*. As the manga magazine market grew and diversified, he turned out a steady stream of popular series

In 1970, in collaboration with Kazuo Koike, Kojima began the work that would seal his reputation, *Kozure*

*Okami* (*Lone Wolf and Cub*). Before long the story had become a gigantic hit, eventually spinning off a television series, six motion pictures, and even theme song records. Koike and Kojima were soon dubbed the "golden duo" and produced success after success on their way to the pinnacle of the manga world.

When *Atsuga Japan* magazine was launched in 1994, Kojima was asked to serve as consultant, and he helped train the next generation of manga artists.

In his final years, Kojima turned to creating original graphic novels based on the movies of his favorite director, Akira Kurosawa. Kojima passed away on January 5, 2000 at the age of 71.



# THE RONIN REPORT

*by Tim Ervin*

As with most occasions of men taking up arms, the reason for the evolution of the samurai warrior was simple: to protect the people of an organized society, to control a population in that society, and to go forth and conquer new lands. From the time Japan was first occupied it was besieged with violence. Waves of immigrating peoples washed across the shores of the Japanese island chain. From the North came a Caucasian race from what is now southern Russia, and from the South came what would be later known as Korean peoples, carrying Chinese customs and religions. Naturally, the societies clashed and elbowed for room on the islands. This struggle for land and survival fueled the structures of a society in need of protection from outside influences, and as we see in society today in order to defend one's people from another's it is necessary to raise arms and join together in force. Thus samurai warriors naturally evolved in what would become Japan.

Legend, however, tells the story differently, involving elemental gods forming Japan through divine influence and



bestowing weapons with supernatural powers upon mortal warriors. One of these warriors was Prince Yamato. In his book *Samurai: The Story of a Warrior Tradition*, Harry Cook asserts that Prince Yamato was “in many ways a role model for (future) samurai.” Yamato was fearless, cunning, and highly skilled in martial arts. Legend says that he was given the divine sword “Cloud Cluster” (or “Sword of the Village of the Clustering Clouds”) in order to help him quell the barbarian Ainu people, a largely Caucasian people who defied bureaucratic order and competed for land. In an interesting aside, Cook writes in his book that Prince Yamato’s father, Emperor Keiko, was by legend the first to apply the title “shogun” to one of his generals, and the term “shogun” literally translates to “barbarian-subduing general.”

When the first shogun was named such, the imperial court was strong in influence but short on military prowess. Imperial forces sent to subdue the barbarians were often defeated miserably and, in order to defend their claims, many land owners began training and keeping armed retainers (or knights). These retainers form the basic root of what we know as samurai. As the overlords became more

powerful and claimed imperial descent, they began to clash amongst one another for control of land and vassals. Samurai warriors acted as pawns in power struggles, and those who were the most cunning, skilled, and powerful succeeded in claiming more land and influence for their lords. Constant wars and intermarrying between powerful clans led to consolidation of power, and eventually a small number of clans were fighting large-scale, bloody wars. These wars continued for hundreds of years, relying on generation after generation of familial revenge and hunger for land and power. These civil wars, as well as wars against invading forces such as Kublai Khan's massive Mongolian onslaught in the late 12th century, brought refinement to samurai warrior tactics and changed the focus of weaponry from the bow and arrow to the sword.

*(to be continued)*



*Lone Wolf and Cub* (*Koppe Gumsu* in Japan) is acknowledged worldwide for the brilliant writing of series creator Kazuo Koike and the groundbreaking cinematic visuals of the late Goseki Kojima. Creating unforgettable imagery of stark beauty, kinetic fury, and visceral thematic power, the epic samurai adventure has influenced a generation of visual storytellers both in Japan and in the West.

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